



African Americans At Snee Farm



Snee Farm

Charles Pinckney, an author and signer of the United States Constitution, owned Snee Farm from the late 18th to early 19th century. It was an active farm for over two hundred years. Rice and indigo were two of the crops grown at Snee Farm during Pinckney's time. Although these crops were probably not the primary product of Snee Farm, they were the two principal cash crops grown on most coastal plantations and were very labor-intensive. Enslaved Africans formed the workforce.

Slavery

Agricultural operations like Snee Farm depended upon slave labor to harvest the crops. The development of the plantation system in the Lowcountry was fueled by the presence of slaves from West Africa where rice was grown in similar geographic conditions. Many of these enslaved Africans were brought to South Carolina specifically for their knowledge and experience in cultivating rice. In addition, their knowledge of

cattle tending, ability to navigate the coastal creeks and inland waterways, and boat building skills made them valuable to the operation of the Lowcountry plantations. Having come from many cultures and speaking different languages, the enslaved Africans evolved a common culture and language here, known today as Gullah or Geechee. The Gullah people have made many contributions to the American way of life, including various skills,

Charles Pinckney

Charles Pinckney was a statesman, soldier, politician, attorney, governor, ambassador, community leader, and a founding father of the United States. He was also a slaveholder and defender of the institution of slavery.

During his delegation to the 1787 Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, Pinckney adamantly refused to allow even the mention of slavery into the U.S. Constitution, threatening to withdraw South Carolina's support if the issue was addressed:

"South Carolina can never receive the plan if it prohibits the slave trade. In every proposed extension of the powers of Congress, South Carolina has expressly and watchfully excepted that of meddling with the importation of negroes."

Since crops such as rice were extremely labor intensive, and the economy of the South was based largely on agriculture, the slavery of Africans and African Americans formed the basis of the South's economy. Charles Pinckney was not the only statesman to defend the institution of slavery. Many southern representatives held the same view.

A 1787 inventory of the estate of Pinckney's father sheds much light into the family's wealth and social status. Shown on the reverse side, part of this list gives the names, occupations, skills and monetary values of forty-five slaves at Snee Farm. As you can see, the slaves who possessed trade skills were usually valued higher than those who performed general labor tasks.

1787 Snee Farm Slave Inventory	Name	Occupation	Year 1787 Pounds	Year 2000 U.S. Dollars
	Cudjoe	Driver & Sawyer ¹	£120.00.00	\$12,444.30
	Inba & child Phyllis	Field Slave	80.00.00	8,296.19
	Their son	Wheelwright ²	60.00.00	6,222.15
	Their son, Joe		45.00.00	4,667.61
	Their son, Tom		40.00.00	4,148.09
	Their son, Shanney		30.00.00	3,111.07
	Their son, Roger		20.00.00	2,074.05
	Inba, her Father		-/-	0
	Affy	House Wench ³	70.00.00	7,259.17
	Her daughter, Sary		25.00.00	2,593.56
	Her son, Carolina		40.00.00	4,148.09
	Her daughter, Flora		30.00.00	4,148.07
	Her daughter, Sue		25.00.00	2,074.56
	Cyrus	Carpenter	120.00.00	12,444.30
	Dina, his wife		-/-	0
	Charlotte, her daughter		80.00.00	8,296.19
	Cate, her daughter		70.00.00	7,259.17
	Rose, her sister		40.00.00	4,148.09
	Sam, their son		40.00.00	4,148.09
	Bella, their daughter		20.00.00	2,074.05
	Frank, Cate's husband	Cooper ⁴	20.00.00	12,444.30
	Quomina	Gardener	10.00.00	1,037.03
	Dye, his wife		20.00.00	2,074.05
	Clarinda, their daughter		60.00.00	6,222.15
	Elsy, her sister		-/-	0
	Prissy, her child		80.00.00	8,296.19
	Lena, her daughter		30.00.00	3,111.07
	Moses, Quomina's son		70.00.00	7,259.17
	Isaac, Clarinda's husband	Cooper	80.00.00	8,296.19
	Mulatto Jack	Carpenter, ruptured ⁵	20.00.00	2,074.05
	Bina, his wife		25.00.00	2,593.56
	Sam, their son		50.00.00	5,185.12
	Peggy, their daughter		50.00.00	5,185.12
	Shanney	Oarsman & Field Slave	80.00.00	8,296.19
	Will	Field Slave	50.00.00	5,185.12
	Jack	Field Slave	20.00.00	2,074.05
	Cuffy	Field Slave	20.00.00	2,074.05
	Johnny	Field Slave	20.00.00	2,074.05
	Old Joan	Superannuated ⁶	-/-	0
	Polydor	Carpenter	90.00.00	9,333.21
	London	Cook	50.00.00	5,185.12
	George	Carpenter	100.00.00	10,370.24
	Congaree Ned	Shoe-Maker	100.00.00	10,370.24
	Snee Jack	House Servant	80.00.00	8,296.19
	Rosetta	Girl-Mulatto	50.00.00	5,185.12
	Grand Total		£2,230.00.00	\$231,256.36

¹Foreman and woodcutter.

²Wheelmaker.

³House maid.

⁴Barrel maker.

⁵Injured, or light-duty work.

⁶Without value.

In comparison to the total value of the slaves at Snee Farm, 30 years after this inventory the 715-acre farm was sold for \$4,380, or \$6.13 per acre (in 1817 US dollars).

The original figures were recorded in 1787 British pounds (£). Park staff converted these figures to the modern US dollar equivalent. In 1787, the British monetary system included pounds, shillings and pence; hence the two decimal points.

About Your Visit

Charles Pinckney National Historic Site is administered by Fort Sumter National Monument. The site is located at 1254 Long Point Road in Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. Hours of operation are 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily, except for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years Days.

For more information, write the Superintendent, Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, 1214 Middle Street, Sullivan's Island, SC 29482, call (843) 881-5516, or visit us on the Word Wide Web at:

<http://www.nps.gov/chpi/>